



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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May 27, 1968

SENIOR INTERDEPARTMENTAL GROUP

Chairman's Summary
of Discussion and Decisions
at the
38th SIG Meeting on May 23, 1968

Present:

Under Secretary of State, Chairman
Mr. Earle for the Deputy Secretary of Defense
General Johnson for the Chairman, Joint
Chiefs of Staff
Director of Central Intelligence
Mr. Poats for the Administrator, Agency for
International Development
Director, United States Information Agency
Special Assistant to the President
Under Secretary of Treasury
Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
SIG Staff Director

JCS -- General Orwat
DOD -- Dr. Halperin
State -- Mr. Farley
 Mr. Furnas
 Mr. Lesh

I. Proposed Revision of United States Policy on
Foreign Internal Defense

The Chairman noted that the SIG has long been concerned with the field of counter-insurgency, and recalled the commissioning in December 1967 of a review of our policy under the auspices of the Political-Military Group (PMG). He expressed his thanks to all those who had participated in the Working Group headed

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by Mr. Furnas, and invited Mr. Farley to present the proposed revision.

Mr. Farley observed that the paper had been written by an inter-agency group and had received widespread clearance from all departments and agencies concerned; hence he would not attempt to summarize the new policy, but would comment instead on the philosophy behind it.

First, Mr. Farley said, the PMG Working Group had not tried to function as experts in counter-insurgency operations but as a forum for policy and management review. Their goal had been to write a general guide to policy and procedure in the field of foreign internal defense, on the basis of which country specialists could operate. For that reason the final paper was perhaps not fully responsive to the directive of the SIG, in that the Working Group had chosen not to deal with specific country situations because of their great diversity. These would, however, be addressed by the IRGs on the basis of the general guidelines in the policy paper.

Second, Mr. Farley continued, the members of the Working Group had not approached their task solely in the spirit of reform. They had been guided by their understanding that the SIG desired both greater selectivity in criteria for our internal defense assistance to foreign countries, on one hand, and improved capacity for quick response to country situations demanding urgent action on the other. Furthermore, the Working Group had attempted to follow the practice of recent years in foreign internal defense. They hoped that the result was a document which, although quite different from the 1962 United States Overseas Internal Defense Policy (USOIDP), would have direct relevance for those dealing with country programs and with training.

Third, Mr. Farley went on, the Working Group had tried to define the new procedures in keeping with the spirit and practice of NSAM 341, with responsibility placed on the Ambassador and Country Team abroad,

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and on the Country Director/IRG/SIG mechanism in Washington. As an adjunct to this organization, the new policy included the recommendation that the PMG act as a monitor of foreign internal defense plans and programs on behalf of the SIG. This addition, Mr. Farley explained, hopefully would provide an independent review of implementation of the new policy by the IRGs, and a critical look at new plans and programs by a group apart from those with any direct responsibility for the programs in question.

In conclusion, Mr. Farley commented that the chief follow-up actions would be a review of the National Interdepartmental Seminar (NIS) and related training programs by the Committee on Training, and the re-definition, where required, of roles and missions in accord with the new policy, mainly by the military. Both reports eventually would come to the SIG for approval. Mr. Farley added that he envisaged something in the nature of a permanent sub-group of the PMG, perhaps headed by Mr. Furnas, to deal with foreign internal defense matters. Hopefully, over time this group would develop a reservoir of experience which would be of assistance to the IRGs.

The Chairman stated that he felt the new policy represented a positive contribution. The old Special Group (CI) had been immensely effective in focusing attention within the US Government on what in 1962 was a rather new concept, but the representation on the Special Group had proved to be at too high a level to maintain effective support over the longer term. This paper now appeared to place responsibility at the most effective level in the governmental structure. He believed the imposition of stricter criteria for assistance was a good idea, and that the IRGs would be in the best position to appraise country situations. The Chairman added that he hoped each Assistant Secretary would consider carefully the experience in ARA with the COIN sub-group of the IRG, which had been very successful in bringing to bear needed expertise on operational country problems.

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The Chairman then remarked that he hoped that in the implementation of the new policy Assistant Secretaries and their IRGs would demand a more coherent assessment of the progress of field programs by Ambassadors and Country Teams. Too often at present field recommendations appeared to reflect three or four essentially separate views of a given situation, which had been "glued together" for submission to Washington.

He also was pleased, the Chairman said, with the designation of the PMG to supply critical appraisal and assist the SIG. He anticipated that the PMG, as an essentially disinterested group, could act as a gadfly in the administration of internal defense policy.

There were several lessons, the Chairman went on, which had been incorporated in the new policy. One was that internal defense programs had to be very narrowly tailored to suit specific country situations, as the cases of Guatemala and Thailand, recently before the SIG, certainly proved. Another important lesson was that it was fruitless for the United States to expend its resources in any country where the local government was not committed to the same development goals as we. Without clear recognition by the local government of the need for economic and social progress, we would accomplish little or nothing by attempting to strengthen internal security alone.

Mr. Helms agreed that the new policy statement was an improvement over the 1962 USOIDP, and stated that he felt the PMG would be in a more advantageous position to monitor foreign internal defense matters than the Special Group (CI). He added that he considered this revision a distinct step forward.

General Johnson concurred that the new paper represented a positive contribution, but said he would like to propose two possible revisions. First, on the basis of his experience in the JCS, he felt that the

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question of establishing priorities would be of key importance. In effect all the IRGs would be competing for scarce resources and personnel in proposing foreign internal defense programs, and, in his opinion, the task of establishing priorities would prove to be one of the primary functions to be performed by the PMG. Therefore General Johnson recommended that this concept be given primacy in the outline of the duties of the PMG in the SIG directive. There were several expressions of support for this proposal, and the Chairman agreed to include the suggested revision when the implementing directive is issued.

Second, General Johnson proposed that the outline of a foreign internal defense plan include -- perhaps as a separate annex -- greater emphasis on sociological analysis of the internal structure of a country. He cited Vietnam as an example of a country in which United States efforts had been hindered by our failure to come to grips with the sociological structure of the nation in the development of our programs.

Mr. Walt Rostow recalled that this need had also been felt at the time of the founding of the Special Group (CI), and that a series of such studies had been undertaken then by INR; some eventually had been woven into NPPs on the countries in question. Mr. Rostow also commented that he had found some of the best expertise for this type of sociological analysis among CIA personnel in the field of operations, where such information was invaluable to getting the job done.

Mr. Helms seconded Mr. Rostow's view, noting that the need for sociological analysis in depth unfortunately was difficult to sell within the United States Government, except when there was some clear operational link. He mentioned the crash programs to study the role of Buddhism in Vietnam which had been inspired by the need to find the answer of how to cope with the demonstrative weapon of self-immolation.

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Mr. Marks remarked that USIA had been trying without success for some time to obtain additional funds from Congress for precisely this type of sociological/cultural research on priority target countries. In practice, Mr. Marks said, his agency often had to rely on the research projects approved in the JCS or CIA budgets. However, he added, Senator Fulbright had just succeeded in cutting appropriations for sociological projects in the Defense budget, and had issued a warning not to seek more funds in that area.

The Chairman commented that, tactically at least, he thought there would be far greater acceptance of such research if the projects were posed in purely operational terms, such as testing a specific program proposal, for example, against traditional attitudes or practices within a given country. He would agree with General Johnson that sociological analysis should be given particular weight in the field of foreign internal defense. We must strive to avoid the pitfall of imposing a strictly United States viewpoint on any country or region. To some degree, he felt, this was a weakness of the Martin Study on Latin America, which sometimes appeared to project United States values, likes, and dislikes on the people of Latin America.

Mr. Walt Rostow remarked that he felt Congressional opposition to sociological studies could be partially overcome, and the final product improved, by being very selective in commissioning such studies and exhausting all resources within the United States Government before turning to private research facilities. Mr. Rostow stated that the Country Teams in overseas mission should make the first contribution; then all concerned government agencies should be canvassed, and only after those resources had been tapped should we consult established academic experts. Furthermore, Mr. Rostow said, such projects should begin with only 4-5 target countries, rather than taking a shotgun approach covering 50 or 100 countries.

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Messrs. Helms and Marks spoke in favor of General Johnson's proposal, and the latter explained that he would anticipate a special annex might be prepared by the Country Team as supporting material for an internal defense plan, specifically exploring the effect of sociological/cultural/religious factors on program proposals. The Chairman agreed.

Mr. Rostow went on to comment that he foresaw one possible problem in the administration of foreign internal defense policy under the proposed revision. It was his impression, he continued, that the greatest successes achieved under the old Special Group (CI) were on two widely separated planes: either at the top political level, in supporting -- or in some cases, removing support for -- a given leader or regime, or at the low level of meeting critical hardware requirements -- the realm of "cops and choppers." He hoped that adoption of the revised policy, which stressed the complex of economic/political/social/psychological factors as a guide to action, would not cause us to lose sight of the key importance of the top political leadership in a country, or the relative effectiveness of a small but timely input of rifles, helicopters, or communications equipment to deal with an insurgency situation.

Mr. Marks observed that Mr. Rostow's apprehensions, if carried to their logical conclusion, would constitute a really basic criticism of the new policy. In effect, Mr. Rostow was questioning whether the bureaucratic mechanism as revised could cope successfully with the counterinsurgency job.

In the ensuing discussion Mr. Poats observed that, despite the acknowledged successes of the Special Group (CI), the concept of getting the highest policy level in the United States Government to focus on the smallest details of counterinsurgency had not proved to be viable over the longer term. General Johnson remarked that the problems Mr. Rostow had posed could

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be addressed later, at the time when missions began to submit internal defense plans. For the present, General Johnson said, he felt that the general policy line of the revision was valid; its implementation would be the test.

Mr. Marks referred to the proposed study of the NIS and associated training programs, and underlined the importance of this aspect of the problem. He said the question was not only what we ought to be teaching, but are we training the right people? The Chairman agreed that training was a problem of first importance. Although there had been an attempt to send ambassadors assigned to key countries to the NIS before departure for their posts, there had been difficulty in communicating the sense of the importance of the seminar. The Chairman commented that the NIS had not been working as well as he had hoped, although that was no reflection on those administering the course. One suggestion had been that the NIS was too long. The central issue, Mr. Helms and General Johnson commented, was to ensure the attendance of the right people to make the seminar a success. All agreed that they would look forward to the report of the Committee on Training with interest and concern.

With the understanding that the two revisions proposed by General Johnson and the rest of the SIG discussion would be taken into account in the implementing directive, the revised United States Policy on Internal Defense in Selected Foreign Countries was approved to supersede the 1962 USOIDP.

II. Planning in Anticipation of Foreign Crises

The Chairman requested Mr. Farley to open the discussion of the paper.

Mr. Farley briefly described the background of the Contingency Coordinating Committee (CCC) founded in 1964, and noted the limitations on the scope of its planning and the difficulties it had faced. The paper before the SIG, Mr. Farley pointed out, would have the effect of abolishing the CCC and placing

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responsibility for contingency planning directly on the Assistant Secretary of State and the IRG in each geographic bureau. Furthermore, the mandate for planning would be broadened to include economic and political crises even if there were no anticipated involvement of United States military forces. The second portion of the paper, Mr. Farley concluded, was designed as a guide for more efficient organization in time of crisis.

The Chairman explained that he personally felt strongly that such contingency studies were valuable in bridging the management gap that sometimes is felt in the first hours of an emergency. During the recent tension over troop movements along the borders of Czechoslovakia, the Chairman said, he had been very pleased to be able to refer the White House to the comprehensive study of possible Soviet military or economic pressures in Eastern Europe, which had been circulated to all SIG members. The Chairman remarked that such planning must be done in advance; there was no time to begin writing contingency papers once a crisis had broken. He realized that such studies were not popular, since most of the contingencies for which we were obliged to plan would never occur. But there was no question in his mind of the great value of having a study in hand for that one crisis in a hundred that inevitably would occur.

General Johnson remarked that his military experience had led him to the conclusion that planning of this kind was a great help in orienting oneself to meet a real crisis. Mr. Farley added that the writing of a contingency study also served a training function, which would be useful for country directors, desk officers, and others who might be newly assigned to their positions.

Mr. Walt Rostow warned against the danger of becoming so committed to the detailed terms of a contingency plan that one lost flexibility in dealing with the unpredictable development of a crisis. The Chairman remarked that, regardless of whether a crisis were precisely the one for which planning had been done, the process of contingency planning would have

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created the important inter-agency contacts, set the stage for greater teamwork, and established a framework of detailed information on the country in question which would be of immediate use in any crisis.

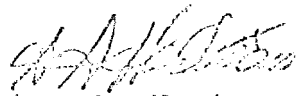
Mr. Farley mentioned that he thought he was not alone in observing that the monitoring role assigned to the PMG in the foreign internal defense paper might effectively be repeated in the field of contingency planning, especially when dealing with any plan anticipating possible use of United States military forces. General Johnson supported this suggestion, noting that only slight re-drafting would be required. The Chairman and several other members expressed their approval of a revision to make uniform the role of the PMG in the two papers in question.

The Chairman commented that a study of a purely economic crisis might have international implications so broad that it would be difficult for the regular membership of the IRGs and the PMG to deal with it. He and Mr. Barr agreed that such studies might be referred to special groups which would include all financial agencies concerned.

Mr. Eugene Rostow proposed that the directive implementing the contingency planning and crisis management paper refer specifically to the requirement for attention to public relations, Allied consultation, and Congressional liaison. Mr. Poats commented that he hoped some means would be found to include the often very imaginative views of the intelligence community in IRG contingency studies, and to take advantage of the contribution to be made by those with primarily economic expertise as well.

With the understanding that the SIG directive would take into account the views of the several members expressed in this meeting, the paper on Planning in Anticipation of Foreign Crises was approved.

III. Summary of Discussion of Agenda Item 3 Distributed Separately


Arthur A. Hartman
Staff Director